

Immersion Dyeing with Acid Dyes

- If dyeing yarn, wind it into a skein and loosely tie to prevent unwinding each skein.
- Either soak fibre or fabric in white vinegar and very warm tap water for at least 30 minutes or add vinegar to your dye stock.
- Start with a ratio was $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vinegar to 2 litres of water or there about. Use cheap white household vinegar. This is an acetic acid. The acid in the vinegar sets the colour in the fibre or fabric.
- Mix $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dye powder (depending on desired colour intensity) and 2- 3 litres of water, enough to cover the fibre or fabric. Stir to dissolve the dye powder
- If you have not soaked the fibre or fabric in vinegar, add about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a cup per litre of dye stock.
- Gently squeeze excess water from fibre or fabric.
- Pour dye stock over fibre or fabric and stir gently.
- To set the dye, you will need to apply steam.
- To do this either:
 1. place fabric into a microwave safe bowl with a lid, a bowl with plastic wrap on top or a zip lock bag and microwave on high for 2-10 minutes depending on volume.
 2. place the fabric in a steamer saucepan and steam on the stove top or use an electric steamer. Steam for around half an hour.
- Watch this to ensure it does not burst or bubble over. You want to create steam, not boil the liquid away.
- Once you have used a bowl or pot for dyeing, you should not use it for food.
- Let fibre or fabric sit until it cools as this will allow further absorption of the dye into the fibre or fabric while it cools and reduce the risk of wools felting.
- Soak in warm tap water (the same temperature as the fibre or fabric so it does not felt) until the water is clear. Sometimes this takes 2 or 3 soaks. You can also use vinegar or Synthrapol in to the rinse water to reduce the amount of water used.
- Once rinsed, gently squeeze out excess water and dry. You may want to put the fibre or fabric into fabric or mesh lingerie bags and spin in the washing machine to remove excess water. This takes a huge amount of water out of the fibre or fabric and speeds the drying time. If you have dyed yarn, you may want to weight the bottom of the skein to stretch it out a bit. However, please take care if spinning wool to prevent felting.